

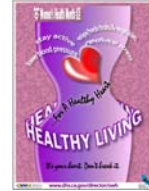
## Cardiovascular Disease and California Women

Cardiovascular diseases (heart disease and strokes) are the first and third leading causes of death among California women. Cardiovascular diseases constitute about 40 percent of all deaths of California women. The age-adjusted rates of heart disease and stroke deaths in 2002 were 180.5 per 100,000 and 55.3 per 100,000 respectively<sup>1</sup>.

About 5.6 percent of California women reported that a health care professional ever told them that they had heart disease or a stroke<sup>2</sup>. Among the race/ethnicity groups, 7.4 percent of the African American/Black, 6.1 percent of White, and 5.0 percent of Hispanic/Latina reported that a health care professional ever told them that they had heart disease or a stroke.

Below are some California women's statistics of risk factors that are associated with cardiovascular disease:

- **Hypertension (High Blood Pressure - HBP)** – Evidence shows that as HBP rises, the risk of heart disease and stroke increases<sup>3</sup>. About 23.2 percent of adult California women reported that they were ever diagnosed with HBP<sup>4</sup>. Among the race/ethnicity groups, 34.7 percent of African American/Black women, 30.9 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native women, 24.9 percent of White women, 20.5 percent of Asian women and 17.3 percent of Latina women reported that they were diagnosed with HBP.
- **Physical Inactivity** – It is estimated that physical inactivity almost doubles the chance of dying from coronary heart disease<sup>3</sup>. In 2003, about 21.8 percent of women reported that they did not participate in any physical activity or exercise during the past month<sup>5</sup>. But 25.6 percent of California women reported that they had done vigorous physical activity in a usual week, compared to 36.3 percent of California men. (Vigorous physical activity is defined as causing large increases in breathing or heart rate for 20 or more minutes per day, 3 or more days per week).



- **Overweight/Obesity** – Overweight and obesity are associated with an increased risk for high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes and cardiovascular disease<sup>3</sup>. In California, 46.5 percent, nearly half of adult women, are considered overweight or obese (estimated by Body Mass Index (BMI), a measure of body fat based on a person's weight and height)<sup>4</sup>.
- **Diabetes** – It is estimated that about 80 percent of people with diabetes die of cardiovascular disease<sup>3</sup>. Independently, diabetes was ranked as the seventh cause of death among California women in 2002<sup>1</sup>. About 6.0 percent of adult California women reported that they were ever diagnosed with diabetes<sup>6</sup>. Among the race/ethnicity groups, 10.3 percent of African American/Black women, 8.4 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native women, 7.3 percent of Latina women, 5.1 percent of Asian women, and 5.0 percent of White women reported being ever diagnosed with diabetes.
- **Tobacco Use** – Estimates indicate that about 40 percent of deaths associated with tobacco use, result from cardiovascular disease<sup>3</sup>. About 13.3 percent of California women reported that they were current smokers. Smoking prevalence was higher for American Indian/Alaska Native women, followed by African American/Black women, and White women, compared to Latina and Asian women<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> - California Department of Health Services. Vital Statistics of California, 2002.  
<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/hisp/chs/OHIR/Publication/Highlights/VSC2002/VSC2002.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> - California Department of Health Services. Office of Women's Health. California Women's Health Survey, 2004

<sup>3</sup> - California Department of Health Services. California Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program.  
<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cdcb/chronic/Documents/CardioBrochure.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> - California Health Interview Survey, 2001, 2003 (combined). <http://www.chis.ucla.edu>

<sup>5</sup> - California Department of Health Services. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2003.

<sup>6</sup> - California Health Interview Survey, 2001. <http://www.chis.ucla.edu>